

## **SECURE COMMONWEALTH PANEL MEETING**

*December 12, 2007*

*Virginia Emergency Operations Center*

Member Attendance: Bruce Benson, Paula Burnette, Eric Casey, Bob Crouch, David Smith, Kelly Hobbs, Ralph Davis, Jim Horton, Cathie Hutchins, Gail Jaspen, Ron Keys, John Knapp, Greg Lucyk, Dario Marquez, John Marshall, Leigh Middleditch, Mike Neuhard, John O'Bannon, Norris Royston, Beverly Sherwood, Henry Stanley.

### **WELCOME AND OCP UPDATE:**

Jason Eaton of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management welcomed the panel and guests to the Virginia Emergency Operations Center, which serves as the operations center for state efforts before, during and after emergencies and disasters strike or threaten Virginia. Located in a secure facility on the grounds of the Virginia State Police Headquarters in Richmond, Va., the Virginia Emergency Operations Center is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to respond to calls for assistance from 135 local governments and city jurisdictions throughout Virginia.

Bob Crouch thanked the panel for attending and reviewed staff changes for the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness. Chris Essid has been appointed as Director of the Office of Emergency Communications within the department's National Protection and Programs Directorate and Constance McGeorge has assumed the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator's position. Mike McAllister is on loan from the Virginia Department of Transportation to assist our office in the continuation of our critical infrastructure protection program. We thank the Virginia Department of Transportation for their assistance in loaning Mike to our office.

### **JOINT TASK FORCE CIVIL SUPPORT OVERVIEW**

Major General Bob Newman, Adjutant General, introduced Major General Chip Long, Commander of the Joint Task Force Civil Support.

General Long thanked the panel and Bob Crouch for inviting him to speak on the Joint Task Force Civil Support program and played a video on who they are and what they do.

The purpose of Joint Task Force Civil Support (JTF-CS) is to save lives, prevent injury and provide temporary critical life support during a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or high-yield Explosive (CBRNE) situation in the United States or its territories and possessions. JTF-CS is the only military organization dedicated solely to planning and integrating Department of Defense forces for consequence management support to civil authorities in such a situation.

While hoping the need never arises, JTF-CS stands ready to aid the designated Primary Federal Agency, most likely the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in charge of managing the consequences of a CBRNE accident or incident. A former

independent agency tasked with planning for and responding to disasters, FEMA became part of the Department of Homeland Security in March 2003. When directed, JTF-CS deploys and establishes command and control of DoD forces supporting the Primary Federal Agency in order to reduce the harmful effects of a CBRNE situation.

JTF-CS is a standing joint task force comprised of active, reserve and Guard members from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, as well as civilian personnel, and is commanded by a federalized Army National Guard General Officer. Established in October 1999, JTF-CS is a subordinate unit of U.S. Northern Command, a unified combatant command formed in October 2002 to plan, organize and execute both homeland defense and civil support missions. When directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense, USNORTHCOM provides defense support of civil authorities, including consequence management operations.

JTF-CS accomplishes its consequence management mission in strict adherence with the principles of the Constitution and public law. Deployment of JTF-CS, at the direction of the Commander of U.S. Northern Command, and on the authority of the Secretary of Defense, would occur only after a Governor requests federal assistance from the President, and after the President issues a Presidential Disaster Declaration. In any domestic setting, JTF-CS remains in support of the Primary Federal Agency throughout the CBRNE consequence management operation.

#### *Highlights*

- JTF-CS supports the Primary Federal Agency (typically FEMA, now part of Department of Homeland Security in managing the consequences of a CBRNE situation in the U.S. or its territories and possessions.
- The purpose of JTF-CS is to save lives, prevent injury and provide temporary critical life support during a CBRNE situation.
- Deployment of JTF-CS, at the direction of the Commander of U.S. Northern Command, and on the authority of the Secretary of Defense, would occur only upon the request of civil authorities.
- JTF-CS consists of members of all services, as well as civilian personnel, and is commanded by a federalized Army National Guard General Officer.

General Long wanted to stress to the panel that they were passionate in what they do. General Long is on call 24/7 and must respond to a scene if called upon within 4 hours. His staff attended with him today and will be around most of the day for questions.

A question posed to General Long was with the closure of Fort Monroe due to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, where will JTF-CS move? Fort Eustis.

Another question posed was what was the nearest military base in the western part of Virginia? For the JTF-CS to respond, the incident does not need to be within walking distance.

A question was asked on JTF-CS relationship with the private sector. This is one area in which the JTF-CS has not done a good job. They do have certain sections of their emergency community plans that require contact with such businesses such as Wal-Mart to use their parking lots for incidents.

### **VIGILANT GUARD**

Colonel Bob Simpson of the Virginia Department of Military Affairs discussed their annual exercise called Vigilant Guard. An exercise designed for the National Guard, in coordination with local, state and federal agencies, to exercise its emergency response plans, policies and procedures during a simulated terrorist attack against the National Capital Region. This was a federal exercise and was funded federally.

The exercise took place on September 5-7, 2007, with Virginia as host. Most of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region III states were involved, along with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Washington DC National Guard, Washington DC Emergency Management Agency, Maryland National Guard, and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency. Fairfax County was also a key partner in planning and participation.

The scenario involved domestic Islamic groups and major terrorist activities. The first event was at an Atlanta Braves baseball game. Since this was not in Virginia, most of the activity was what we need to do to heighten our response, what should we focus on. Message flow began from the Virginia Fusion Center.

The second terrorist event involved a pipeline explosion within the National Capital Region (NCR). It was not high-tech, no biological event. The other events included chlorine gas leak in Alexandria and an expansion of the Wilson Bridge being blown up. These events were similar to the DC sniper event, similar pattern, same sort of challenges. These all led to decisions by the President and then down to the Governor all declaring emergencies.

Strengths of the National Guard's performance:

- National Guard Adaptability – National Guard soldiers are very resourceful; they know how to operate in a stressful environment.
- Coordination with Civil Authorities
- Threat Analysis – the National Guard does well with threat analysis, but needs to work on predictive analysis more.
- Concept of Operations Refinement

Improvements:

- Utilization of Communication Assets and Information Sharing
- Regional Coordination – coordination within the NCR (Maryland, DC, and Virginia) needs to be improved. What gets secure and what doesn't? Who makes the decisions?

- Mission Assignment –problems arose with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management’s software called WebEOC and the handling of missions. This tool tends to look in the rearview mirror and not across the region. It is hard to see where in the Commonwealth key resources are located.

Lessons Learned: Military exercises should cause the unit to fail; hereby understanding where are weaknesses and strengths are.

- Multiple Communication Systems
- Sharing Guardsmen
- Anticipating National Guard Missions
- National Guard Mission Creation
- Establishing/Effects of FPCON

Need to have military eyes on an incident, do our own analysis. The Guard has identified people/positions that need training on such courses as the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

Virginia is very centralized. We need to make sure we are not committing resources and guardsman where they do not need to be.

A question was posed about regional emergency operations centers and how the National Guard works with them. There is not much coordination between the two; however, the Guard does mandate the lead officer in an armory meet with their local emergency manager designated within their Community Response Action Plans. Col Simpson wanted to stress that the National Guard was a support agency and many of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management local exercises involves National Guard participation.

Bob Crouch mentioned that the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Virginia Department of Health, and the Virginia Department of Transportation are just some of the state agencies that aggressively partner with federal government when there is an opportunity. For instance, Virginia’s involvement in the federally sponsored exercise Noble Resolve.

#### **CITIZEN EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS AND CITIZEN CORPS PROGRAMS**

This topic was presented by Suzanne Simmons of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Please see attached handouts and PowerPoint.

Bob Crouch mentioned that he was thinking of scheduling a one-day mini Citizen Emergency Response Team training for the panel members.

### **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Susan Mongold from the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness presented information on performance measures. Please refer to the handouts.

Susan showed the panel the format the Governor's Cabinet uses to enter their objectives and performance measurements. The system is called Virginia Performs and the handout lets you see what areas the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness are responsible for and the measurements set.

The sub panels of the Secure Commonwealth Panel need to summarize their progress to date, establish 1-3 measurements in the format provided, and return to Wendy Hoffman by February 28, 2008. Susan has provided a working draft of these in your handouts. Please change them if revisions are needed.

### **BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SUB PANEL:**

This sub panel report was given by Leigh Middleditch.

The sub panel held a meeting in Charlottesville on December 9. At that meeting three working groups were developed.

- (1) Education. The focus of this group will be working with small businesses on the importance of business continuity of operations planning. In the event of a disaster, businesses should not expect the Commonwealth to assist, but should have a plan in place. The sub panel does need to use trade organizations more, such as insurance companies and banks and get them involved in activities. An award of some sort was discussed to encourage trade organizations in participating like discounts on their insurance rates if small businesses have continuity of operations plans. Also, sub panel members are working on getting the Virginia Chamber of Commerce on board also.
- (2) Information Sharing. Discussed the benefits of the VCIS system and once you are registered in the system your businesses services, resources, and personnel can be shared much like the Pittsburg regional effort.
- (3) Credentialing. Security officials, government officials can be issued cards to enter a disaster zone. This working group will look at identifying people in an event such as truck drivers that are given that stamp of approval to enter the scene as well.

### **HEALTH AND MEDICAL SUB PANEL**

This sub panel report was given by John O'Bannon and Lisa Kaplowitz.

Please see attachment on sub panel activities and the Methicillin Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA) infection.

A question was posed to Dr. Kaplowitz whether or not Virginia Department of Health is working with private schools as well as public? Her answer was affirmative.

Another question was asked about the Adenovirus. The Virginia Department of Health keeps updated on all the new mutations that we continue to see.

#### **FIRST RESPONDER SUB PANEL**

This sub panel report was given by Colonel Henry Stanley.

- The Draft Legislation to codify the State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) has been submitted to the Governor for potential inclusion in his legislative package for the coming General Assembly session.
- The 2008 Interoperability Strategic Plan and the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Grant Investment Justifications were submitted to the Department of Homeland Security, we expect to hear back from them in April on the grant awards.
- The Commonwealth Interoperability Office is exploring opportunities to seek National Best Practices Models.
- Interoperability Performance Measures will be discussed and updated at our next Sub-panel meeting.
- Expect to hold next Sub-panel meeting/call in early January (date TBD)

#### **Sub-panel Priorities:**

- Work with Virginia State Police to obtain a statewide intelligence and management system for prevention. (will require \$5M+)
- Continue to work with state and local stakeholder agencies obtain statewide credentialing and background checks.
- Work with the Virginia State Police to develop marketing and outreach effort to provide regions and localities with information concerning the Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS) and how local system interface will occur.
- Work with Virginia Department of Emergency Management to support efforts of the Heavy and Technical Rescue (HTR) Regional Teams to obtain equipment and funding. (Need \$700K)
- Continue to market, promote and require transition from 10-codes to common language as required by the National Incident Management System. (Progress is being made, but still requires much work to be truly operational across the state)

- Establish the Regional Preparedness Advisory Committees (RPACs) in all 7 Virginia Regions. (already established, working to identify the regional interoperability representatives for each RPAC)
- Complete the statewide baseline inventory for communications equipment and frequencies. (study completed, next steps to analyze the information and use it to guide policy and funding decisions as appropriate)

### **CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION SUB PANEL**

This sub panel report was given by John Knapp.

Please refer to the PowerPoint presentation and handout.

Mr. Knapp thanked the panel for their comments on the Virginia Critical Infrastructure and Protection and Resiliency Strategic Plan. The plan has been updated and professionally drafted to include their comments.

### **OUTREACH SUB PANEL**

This sub panel report was given by Curtis Brown.

An Outreach sub panel meeting is scheduled for January to discuss performance measures and the goals for the coming year. The sub panel staff, which included Julie Stanley (Director, Community Integration for People with Disabilities), Suzanne Simmons (Virginia Department of Emergency Management), Bob Spieldenner (Virginia Department of Emergency Management), Andrea Gaines (Virginia Corps), and Curtis Brown (Office of Commonwealth Preparedness) met recently to discuss the goals and objectives in 2008.

The sub panel would like to focus on the following:

- A resolution of commitment to outreach efforts, especially towards people with disabilities. Also need to promote Ready Virginia efforts more.
- Produce a guide of non-profit stakeholders and the resources they provide, like the acclaimed North Carolina model.
- Continue to work with the Community Based Emergency Response Seminars, which are sessions for emergency management professionals to increase understanding of requirements and expectations between first responders and citizens with disabilities and special needs. These sessions are a collaborative effort with the Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Virginia Department of Social Services. The sub panel would like to expand these efforts and involve more groups.
- The sub panel would also like to complete a Gap Analysis through the work of the Community Based Emergency Response Seminars by identifying gaps in

outreach efforts across the state and using regional stakeholders to assist in resolving those gaps.

### **CONCLUSION**

The panel asked if there was any upcoming legislation in the General Assembly that the panel members need to lobby their legislators to support. Mr. Crouch emphasized our legislation to codify the State Interoperability Executive Committee. The cabinet secretaries do monitor legislation regularly and will pass along any meaningful items.

Bob Crouch thanked all who attended, in particular the panel and all the state agencies that support the panel. Mr. Crouch recognized Dick Hickman from the Senate Finance Committee and our partners from the Department of Homeland Security who also attended today's meeting. Mr. Crouch closed the meeting by reminding the panel members of the four meetings scheduled for 2008.